The Evangelical dimension: The Trump administration's policy

written by Prof. Zaki Shalom | 09.10.2025

Delivering remarks alongside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on September 29, US President Donald Trump asserted: "History has shown us that those who have relations with Israel have thrived, while those who have devoted resources and attention toward the destruction and even annihilation of Israel have languished."

The president is undoubtedly aware that such a sweeping assertion may be challenged on empirical grounds. Indeed, one may point to countries whose foreign policy toward Israel has been favorable and that enjoy strong and prosperous economies. Foremost among them, of course, is the United States. Conversely, there are countries pursuing openly hostile policies toward Israel, such as France and Britain, whose economies have endured significant structural difficulties.

Yet, from a strictly scientific standpoint, it is problematic to establish a causal relationship between a country's economic prosperity or failure and the nature of its relations with Israel. It is more plausible to assume that additional political, structural, and cultural factors account for such economic divergences.

The context of Trump's statement, however, was not economic but religious. It rests on a theological conviction, deeply rooted in the Bible (i.e., the Old Testament) and widely influential within Evangelical Christianity: namely, that those who ally themselves with the fate of the Jewish people will be rewarded with the blessing of God, who regards Israel as His chosen nation.

Netanyahu was quick to amplify this message, as though anticipating it in advance. "President Trump just said it. It's also in the Bible. It says, 'Those who will bless you will be blessed, and those who will curse you will be cursed.' And that's actually what is happening. We want the blessings."

Netanyahu was alluding, in all probability, to the well-known verse from Genesis addressed by God to Abraham: "I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and all the peoples of the earth shall be blessed through you."

The evangelical subtext in Trump's speech was further reinforced by his emphatic assertion regarding the Gaza ceasefire agreement: "Potentially one of the great days ever in civilization." Such rhetoric resonates with the broader evangelical perspective that the Judeo-Christian West finds itself engaged in a clash of

civilizations with forces that oppose the advancement of humanity.

Comparable arguments were recently echoed by Sen. Lindsey Graham, one of Israel's staunchest allies in Congress, who declared: "If America pulls the plug on Israel, God will pull the plug on us. I'm not going to let that happen."

Former president Bill Clinton also revealed, during his tenure, that his family pastor had repeatedly warned him against distancing himself from Israel. Clinton recalled this admonition in his October 1994 address to the Knesset: "'If you abandon Israel, God will never forgive you.' He [the pastor] said it is God's will that Israel, the biblical home of the people of Israel, continue forever and ever."

The evangelical factor constitutes a significant strategic asset for advancing the objectives of the Israeli government. Beyond its role in reinforcing support for Israel's struggle against radical Islamist forces, particularly since Hamas's assault of October 7, 2023, the evangelical dimension may also drive Trump's administration toward recognition of Israel's full sovereignty over Judea and Samaria.

Such recognition would amount to a dramatic, indeed revolutionary, transformation of American Middle Eastern policy as it has been conceived since the 1967 Six Day War.

Published in The Jerusalem Post, October 9, 2025.